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Title: Need to invite the rural local body representatives from Tamil Nadu to particpate in Panchayat Raj Diwas being observed at national level from 22 to 24 April, 2008.

SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN : The Ministry of Panchayati Raj, the Government of India is organising a National Convention of Presidents of Zilla Parishads and Intermediate Panchayats from 22nd to 24th April, 2008 at New Delhi.

I understand that neither the Government of Tamil Nadu nor any rural local body representatives of Tamil Nadu was taken into confidence while the Ministry of Panchayati Raj prepared the draft Charter. The Charter contains many clauses which are not acceptable to the State Governments. The Tamil Nadu Government has selected 68 elected representatives to attend the above Convention. But due to certain unwanted clauses in the Charter, they are not able to attend the Convention. Panchayati raj is a State subject under the Constitution of India. To strengthen the panchayati raj system, the State Governments should be consulted and a common Charter should be drafted for the whole country. Organising a National Convention without consulting and taking into confidence the Tamil Nadu Government will not serve any purpose.

Hence, I urge upon the Union Government to have a dialogue with the Government of Tamil Nadu and to give an opportunity to the State Government and to the elected representatives of the panchayati raj institutions for eliciting their views in these kinds of national level conferences.